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MEXICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT. PROGRESS REPORT, 1967.

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THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT, DEVELOPED BY THE CALIFORNIA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, HAS AS ITS PRIMARY AIM THE IMPROVEMENT OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEXICAN AMERICAN PUPILS. TO ACHIEVE THIS OBJECTIVE, MANY INTERESTED INDIVIDUALS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN SEVERAL UNDERTAKINGS PLANNED SPECIFICALLY TO DEVELOP AND TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATION OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN YOUTH. THIS REPORT PRESENTS A SUMMARY OF EACH OF THOSE UNDERTAKINGS, CENTERED IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS--(1) SPECIAL ENRICHMENT SUMMER SCHOOL USING H 200 MATERIALS FOR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, (2) ASSESSMENT OF VOCATIONAL INTERESTS AND MATURITY OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH, (3) SUMMER PROGRAMS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, (4) CONFERENCES OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATORS, (5) PLANNING FOR AN EXCHANGE OF TEACHERS, INFORMATION, AND MATERIAL, (6) DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROSPECTUS FOR EQUITABLE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPANISH-SPEAKING CHILDREN, (7) DEVELOPMENT OF A DOCUMENT FOR EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAMS DESIGNED TO IMPROVE THE EDUCATION OF MEXICAN-AMERICANS, (8) SURVEY OF MEXICAN-AMERICAN PUPILS IN THE SCHOOL - THEIR STRENGTHS AND NEEDS, (9) CHANGE OF THE CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE SO THAT ALL SCHOOLS WOULD NOT BE REQUIRED TO TEACH IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, (10) A STATEWIDE CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION FOR MEXICAN-AMERICANS, (11) ASSESSMENT OF RURAL MEXICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS IN GRADES PRE-SCHOOL THROUGH 12, AND (13) PUBLIC SERVICE AND INFORMATION. (ES)

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TO: Educational Programs Committee of the State Board of Education

FROM: John Plakos, Coordinator, Mexican-American Education Research Project

SUBJECT: Mexican-American Education Research Project Progress Report

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Problem

Children whose native language is Spanish and whose cultural backgrounds are different from the traditional school culture upon which the curriculum is based may be expected to experience difficulty in meeting the demands of the school world. Among the possible causes of failure are these: (1) a lack of experiences out of which concepts may grow; (2) an inadequate command of the English language which is the language of the instructional program; (3) a lowered self-confidence resulting from repeated frustration and failure; (4) an unrealistic curriculum which imposes reading and writing requirement in English before skills in listening comprehension and in speaking fluency have been accomplished.

In view of these factors which are generally descriptive of the school problems of the Spanish-speaking child from a low-income family, it seems reasonable to design a program of instruction that would attempt to deal with these failure-producing conditions and to assess the effectiveness of such efforts to improve the educational opportunities of the Spanish-speaking children in the schools.

Background

Increased awareness, renewed concern and available funds for programs designed to improve the educational opportunities of Mexican-American pupils have brought into existence a variety of exploratory efforts and proposed solutions to this problem. Among these is a five-year plan for the Development and Implementation of Curricula Research Programs Involving Pupils with Spanish Surnames authorized by Dr. Max Rafferty, State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education, and initiated by Eugene Gonzales, Assistant Superintendent of Public Instruction. The general

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objectives as stated in this proposal are improved communication and increased cooperation among the various agencies and individuals interested in the education of Mexican-American youth, the development of expanded curricula relevant to the social and educational needs of these pupils; the establishment of services necessary for the implementation of experimental programs; the creation of a central depository of literature and instructional materials needed by Mexican-Americans; and the provision of state level leadership to support research efforts and to offer greater assistance to school districts or county schools office where solutions to the unique educational problems of these pupils are sought.

To achieve these stated objectives, many interested individuals assisted and directed by the Research Team, have been involved in several undertakings planned to develop and to improve the education of Mexican-American youth. A summary of past efforts and present status of the Mexican-American Project is hereby submitted for information and review. Complete and more detailed reports of each activity are on file in the Project Office.

I. The Activity

Special Enrichment Summer School Using H 200 Materials for English as a Second Language

Location

Los Nietos, California

Time Period

July 5 - 29, 1966

Personnel Involved

Teachers of Spanish in the Los Nietos District, consultants from the H 200 Project at University of California at Los Angeles, and Mexican-American pupils from four elementary schools and one intermediate school in the Los Nietos District were engaged in this instructional program of English as a second language. The evaluation of this experiment was accomplished by Dr. Joan Lasko, Lecturer in Behavioral Science, School of Business Administration, University of California at Los Angeles.

Outcomes

As a part of the summer enrichment plan, pupils whose competence in English was determined to be very limited were included in this program using H 200 Project materials. These materials are being prepared and field tested by a team of writers working under the direction of the University of California at Los Angeles. The children,

ages six through eight years, met in two groups daily for thirty minutes of instruction. The teachers maintained contact with the parents of these children through home visits. Teachers, parents and pupils expressed satisfaction with this short program and felt that the pupils' speaking fluency in English had improved.

The evaluation report prepared by Dr. Lasko for the Research Project noted that such experiments as the Los Nietos one must be viewed as an attempt to change some aspects of the educational system. Dr. Lasko points to the good attendance records of the pupils, to their improved ability to plan and carry out plans, to the greater "openness" in pupil-adult relationships, and to the freer, more active search for opportunities. The evaluator pointed out that the teachers had been exposed to many changes in planning, in classroom routine, in their own performances and attitudes. Some problem areas were identified as the need for more pre-program meetings; smaller groups for exploring sensitive areas between the Mexican-American and the Anglo teachers; more opportunities for frank confrontations of controversial issues. Dr. Lasko's evaluation suggests that growth occurred in matters of increased awareness of people as individuals and of reduced stereotyping, of new insights developing from parent communication.

Recommendations

1. Summer enrichment programs should be continued and expanded as personnel and funds permit to provide experiences for Mexican-American pupils that they might not ordinarily have.

2. The Project H 200 materials should continue to be field tested and made available for pilot programs of English as a second language.

II. The Activity

Assessment of Vocational Interests and Maturity of Mexican-American Children and Youth

Location

Los Nietos and Wasco School Districts

Personnel Involved

Three hundred eighty-eight boys and girls in grades kindergarten through twelve from metropolitan and rural areas were interviewed in six separate studies. A true-false inventory was administered to two hundred thirty-seven boys and girls in grades five through twelve in metropolitan, suburban and rural areas in five separate

studies. These pupils were all considered to be representative of average school ability and achievement. The interview sought information about the occupational choice and the inventory attempted to discover attitudes toward work. Mothers from the community, high school students as well as school and county personnel from both areas were engaged in gathering the data. Dr. Ilah M. Wilstach prepared a summary of the findings.

Outcomes

According to the information obtained, the following conclusions were stated tentatively and offered by Dr. Wilstach as areas for further research.

1. The two measures of vocational maturity appear to be related to age and grade level but essentially unrelated to each other and to school ability and achievement in general.

2. When asked what they wanted to be when grown or when they had finished school, only 11 of the 388 gave no occupational choice. Therefore, at least 97% of the young people could name an occupational choice.

3. Girls listed teacher, nurse, and secretary most often in that order, and presented fewer choices as a whole than boys.

4. More than half of the choices by boys were in the professions; less than half were clearly related to vocational education.

5. Suburban residents in an area where Mexican-Americans constituted not more than 10% of the population earned higher vocational maturity interview scores.

6. Second-generation metropolitan Mexican-Americans earned lower vocational maturity scores.

7. Most of the students stated they had arrived at a choice independently, but when help was achknowledged, credit was given to parents and relatives as influential in the decision.

8. Average interview scores for bilingual students were comparable to those for non-Spanish-speaking.

9. Overwhelmingly, on the attitude scale, there was acceptance of the idea that "A person can do anything he wants as long as he tries hard."

10. Earnings, accomplishments, "getting ahead," and helping others were important to more than 75% of the respondents.

11. Rural youths were more doubtful about reaching their goals.

12. In the intermediate grades, 6-8, students started to relate personal qualifications to the choice; i.e., "The choice is a good one for me because I can do it," or "I'm good at it."

Recommendations

1. The findings of these studies in Los Nietos and in Wasco should be shared with other school districts where there are heavy concentrations of Spanish-speaking pupils.

2. Further study of the vocational interests, maturity and aspirations should continue.

3. The descriptive information made available from these investigations should be considered when educational practices are being designed for the enhancement of vocational opportunities for Mexican-Americans.

III. The Activity

Summer program of English as a second language

Location

San Ysidro and San Diego, California

Time Period

Summer, 1966

Personnel Involved

One teacher from Sunset Elementary School in San Ysidro and one from Lowell Elementary School in San Diego worked with groups of children between the ages of six to twelve years using the Project H 200 materials developed by the writers at the University of California, Los Angeles. Professor Leila V. Tossas, Associate Professor of Education, San Diego State College, prepared a report on reactions of parents and children to the English as a second language program.

Outcomes

Three groups of elementary Mexican-American pupils received summer instruction in English. The enjoyment of the children was apparent by their active participation in the lessons. The parents were most appreciative of the additional help offered. Professor Tossas reported the enthusiasm and interest of parents. Parents, too, expressed the

desire to attend classes organized on a similar basis.

Recommendations

1. The improvement of skills in English should continue to be a major goal of the Mexican-American Research Project.

2. Continued use of the H 200 materials is a feasible and realistic means to achieve this goal. Other materials for ESL should also be field tested when available.

3. Teacher education should include training in the teaching of English to Spanish-speaking pupils.

4. Preparation for the use of the H 200 materials and/or other ESL materials should be given teachers prior to their use in the classroom. Frequent assistance by ESL specialists should be offered throughout the school term.

IV. The Activity

Conferences of Mexican-American Educators

Location

Lake Arrowhead and Anaheim, California

Time Period

One conference was held in August, 1966 and the second in March, 1967

Personnel Involved

Twenty-one Mexican-American leaders from many disciplines met to examine the problem of school and community failure of a large number of Mexican-American youth. They sought to explore ways of assisting in the designing of plans for improving the opportunities for success among this group. Representatives of many disciplines were present--teachers from grade school to college level, administrators, county office personnel, state department consultants, state board of education member, psychologists, social scientists and other spokesmen for the Mexican-American community.

Outcomes

It was extremely difficult to predict the outcomes of these two conferences as the members of both groups demonstrated a vast range of philosophical thought in regard to the problem of educating Mexican-American youth. There were viewpoints that expressed a

militant, separatist Mexican ideology very possessive of the cultural heritage and highly resistant to Anglo influences. On the other hand, there were positions taken that suggested a complete immersion in the language and customs of the Anglo community. From these two extremes, more temperate views spread out along this continuum from pure Mexicano to total Anglo. The moderate position sought to combine the strengths and virility of the Mexican legacy with the reality and utility of the Anglo world. However, a number of concerns including recommendations for change were adopted during the second conference and will be reproduced soon.

Recommendations

1. The position paper should be disseminated among educators throughout the state.

2. Mexican-American leaders should continue to examine the many issues and points of culture conflict as they arise. By letting their concerns known and by working toward a just solution, the needs of our Spanish-speaking students will be met.

V. The Activity

Planning for an exchange of teachers, information, and material

Location

Mexico City

Time Period

Two planning meetings were held, one in October, 1966 and the second in June, 1967.

Personnel Involved

The possibility of an exchange of educational materials between Mexico and California was established through correspondence between Dr. Rafferty and Dr. Agustin Yanez, Minister of Education, Mexico. Mr. Eugene Gonzales and Mr. John Plakos visited the Minister of Education and his staff, and Mrs. Elizabeth Camacho de Campo, Director of English Instruction for Secondary Schools, Ministry of Education, Mexico City, Mexico.

Outcomes

The Minister of Education of Mexico sent to the State Department of Education a variety of textbooks and workbooks in several subject

areas for both elementary and secondary pupils. These materials have been circulated among educators in California and have been appraised regarding their relevance and suitability for Spanish-speaking youth in American schools. Following the appraisal of the texts from Mexico, the Office of County Superintendent of Schools, Stanislaus County, submitted an NDEA, Title III project and received matching funds for the purchase of texts and materials from Mexico and other Spanish-speaking countries to be used on an experimental basis for the Mexican-American pupils of that county. The approved project permits other districts throughout the state that have Spanish-speaking children in their schools to also apply for matching funds for the purchase of these materials.

As a result of the meetings held in Mexico, plans have been finalized for an exchange of educational materials in quantity, and for an exchange of teachers who would reinforce the regular classroom teachers of Mexico and California.

Recommendations

1. This exchange of teachers should be encouraged as it is a source for competent bilingual aides for districts of California in need of bilingual educators.

2. This exchange of ideas and materials needs to be continued and expanded.

3. The evaluation of materials and methods by a team of American educators should be continued as new instructional media from Mexico becomes available.

4. The criteria for relevance and suitability of materials imported from Mexico and/or other Spanish-speaking countries should be based on considerations of cultural authenticity, absence of stereotyping, consistency with American democratic ideals, cognizance of the United States concept of separation of church and state, and a continual awareness of sensitive areas of ideological conflict.

VI. The Activity

Development of the Prospectus for Equitable Educational Opportunities for Spanish-Speaking Children

Time Period

August, 1966 to April, 1967

Outcome

The Prospectus developed for the Research Project by a team of specialists is a timely and authoritative statement of concepts and of philosophy upon which special programs for the Spanish-speaking children of our schools may be built.

This Prospectus has examined possible causes of school failure among Mexican-American children. Broad guidelines for a plan of action have been suggested and a partial framework for programs has been offered.

Recommendations

1. Copies of the Prospectus should be disseminated among educators throughout the state.

2. Educators throughout our State whose school population includes Mexican-Americans are encouraged to explore these ideas.

VII. The Activity

The development of a document for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Programs Designed to Improve the Education of Mexican-Americans.

Location

Marysville, California

Time Period

September, 1966 - April, 1967

Personnel Involved

The document was developed by Dr. Eleanor Thonis, Director, Yuba County Reading-Learning Center.

Outcome

The author's specific purpose of this paper is to offer some suggestions which may be useful in the development of plans for evaluating programs for Spanish-speaking pupils. The author hopes to draw attention to the many variables that exist within any educational plan and to provide a simplified framework for examining them.

Recommendations

1. Copies of this document should be made available to all districts working with Mexican-American children.

2. Psychologists and psychometrists should continue to seek ways to refine the psychological tools by which these pupils are evaluated, particularly those instruments that are heavily loaded with cultural content and/or items with which Mexican-American pupils have had limited or no experience.

VIII. The Activity

Survey of Mexican-American pupils in the school - Their strengths and needs.

Location

Statewide in California

Time Period

From November, 1966 to April, 1967. Questionnaires were distributed, collected and analyzed.

Outcomes

Following is a list of some of the important findings of the questionnaire:

1. Of the 896 districts that have in attendance children of Mexican descent, 774 or 86% indicated that no district-wide program specifically for the education of Spanish-speaking children exists.

2. Fifty seven percent of the teachers working with these students have not had any special training in working with non-English speaking children.

3. Of the total number of districts responding, 68.5 percent reported that there were no regularly scheduled conferences between parents of Mexican descent and teachers.

4. Seventy seven percent, or 612 districts stated that local employers were not involved in school district efforts to overcome ethnic problems while only 23 percent or 180 stated local employers were involved.

5. Approximately 62 percent, or 496 of the districts feel that course work related to the problems of educationally, disadvantaged, and poverty-stricken children should be required of teachers.

6. Approximately 80 percent, or 627 districts stated that they do not have adequate financial resources to provide for the educational needs of the migrant Mexican-American child without supplemental federal/state funds.

7. Approximately 77 percent, or 692 of the districts responding maintained that their district did not engage in the preparation of curricular materials specifically designed for the Mexican-American child.

8. With regard to personnel needs of districts, 40 percent, or over 360 districts stated that their greatest need is with teacher aides and additional classroom teachers. The next most important stated personnel needs are of counselors- 35 percent, language specialists - 30 percent, psychologists- 27 percent, school social workers - 26 percent, indigenous teacher aides - 22 percent, public health nurses - 19 percent.

9. Only one district of the study indicated bulletins and announcements were typically sent home only in the Spanish language, while 672 districts, or 76 percent of the districts indicated they were sent home only in the English language, 14 percent sent them home both in Spanish and English language.

10. The problem areas that were indicated to present the greatest difficulty to Spanish-speaking children are: a limited vocabulary, reading disabilities, lack of English fluency, and poor written language. Poor health, large class size, nutritional deficiency, and the "other" category were viewed as areas of comparatively few problems. The incidence of other problem areas were less pronounced than those just mentioned. These include: lack of comprehension, poor home/school/parent relationships, lack of appropriate materials, lack of cumulative data, low aspirational level, low interest in school, low achievement, placement difficulty, unpredictable residency factor, speech difficulties, and poor word attack skills.

Recommendations

1. The results of the survey be disseminated to educators throughout the state.

2. Meetings of representatives of teacher-training institutions and staff members of the Division of Instruction of the State

Department of Education should be held to discuss the concerns of educators as identified in the survey.

IX. The Activity

Bilingual Instruction

Location

Mary Covillaud School, Marysville, California

Time Period

A program of bilingual instruction in Spanish and English was offered from October, 1966 through June, 1967.

Personnel Involved

Under the direction of the Mexican-American Project and with the approval of Mr. Alvin Fodor, Superintendent of the Marysville Joint Unified School District, twenty-six pupils from Spanish-speaking, low-income homes have been provided with a special educational program. The teacher, Mrs. Julia Reynolds, the teacher aide, Mrs. Martha Hernandez, the principal, Mr. Bert King, have adjusted the instructional program designed to provide success experiences for elementary pupils age six through ten years. Mr. Gilbert Velasquez and Dr. Eleanor Thonis of the Yuba County Reading-Learning Center have offered psychological and consultant assistance. The Mexican-American project personnel have also assisted in this endeavor.

Outcomes

The children spent every morning in a special bilingual class. The teacher, a native speaker of English, has a good command of Spanish. She was assisted by a teacher-aide, a native speaker of Spanish with an adequate command of English. The room was attractively furnished and equipped with a variety of books, games, toys, art materials, manipulative devices and records. Pictures, charts, and room decorations that contained writing were written in Spanish. Concepts in Arithmetic were developed on a concrete level supported by use of the Spanish language to mediate meaning until such time as the pupils had built an arithmetic vocabulary in English. A daily program to develop and to extend the pupils' skill in Spanish provided reading, writing, and spelling in Spanish. An oral program using Project H 200 materials of English As A Second Language was given. The scope, sequence, and pace of presentation was carefully controlled and systematically reviewed to insure sufficient repetition and practice which hopefully could lead to mastery.

For part of each day, the pupils participated in other classroom activities of the English-speaking children. In music, art, and physical education classes where language was not a hindrance to meaning, the Spanish-speaking pupils joined the various groups according to their most appropriate age placement. They also shared in the total life of the school by having the same recess times for informal playground activities and by taking part in assemblies, school-wide parties, and special programs arranged by community or school groups.

Growth in English and achievement in Arithmetic was measured. The measurement instruments included: interviews with parents, Escala de inteligencia Weschsler para ninos (Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children), Spanish adaptations of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary, Three Wishes, the Madeline Thomas Completion Stories, Machover Draw-a-Person, the Bender Gestalt Test for Young Children, the Gesell Maturation Index and the Linguistic Capacity Index.

A full report on the bilingual experiment, including psychometric data, is in process.

Recommendations

1. A bilingual approach to the educational problems of Mexican-Americans should be examined further.

2. Continued appraisal should be made to determine the effectiveness of bilingual instructional programs.

3. Assessment techniques should be refined to discover any changes in concepts of self-esteem as possible outgrowths of such programs.

4. Materials, methods and other curriculum matters of bilingual proposals should be explored with care and attention to the possible conflicts in culture and content.

5. Other experimental programs in Spanish and in English should be encouraged on a pilot or search model basis.

X. The Activity

Recommendation to the Legislative Committee to amend section 71, Chapter 3, Division I of the Education Code of the State of California which read "All schools shall be taught in the English language".

Time Period

January, 1966

Personnel Involved

Initial draft written by John Plakos with the approval of Mr. Eugene Gonzales, and later refined with the assistance of Mrs. Ruth Craig, Mr. Edward Moreno, Dr. Walter Symons, and Dr. Eleanor Thonis.

Outcome

The recommendation to amend Section 71 which would permit bilingual instruction was adopted by the Legislative Committee. Senator Short introduced his bill to the State Senate which reflected the position of the Legislative Committee and was eventually signed into law by Governor Reagan.

Recommendation

1. The intent of the new law be clearly explained to educators and the general public prior to implementation.

XI. The Activity

State-wide conference co-sponsored by the Mexican-American Education Research Project, Interstate Migrant Education Project, Project for Curriculum Development for Adults with Spanish Surnames, the State Department of Education was attended by 650 educators and special representatives of California.

Location

The Statler-Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles

Time Period

This conference called by the State Superintendent of Instruction on April 13-14, 1967.

Personnel Involved

Representatives of the United States Office of Education, State Departments of Education of California, New Mexico, Arizona, and Texas, the State Legislature, the Office of the Governor, the Office of the Mayor of Los Angeles, colleges and universities, public and private schools, Office of Economic Opportunity, Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture, Department of Public Health, Community Action Programs, private interests and foundations, and the Mexican Ministry of Education were conference participants, panelists and speakers.

Outcomes

The two-day conference provided an exchange of ideas and a discussion of various issues, problems and services needed. Among the topics examined were progress reports of ESEA, Title V, the Mexican-American Child, the migrant child, and migrant adult, language and cultural heritage, migrant housing, program development and implementation, curriculum, counseling, health services, teacher education, parent involvement, and supportive agencies.

The conference ended on an optimistic note, Si, se puede, Yes, it can be done!

Recommendations

1. This opportunity for an exchange of information should be provided on a regular basis.

2. Regional conferences throughout the state should be planned.

3. A second state-wide conference should be considered for the coming year.

XII. The Activity

The Assessment of Rural Mexican-American Students in Grades Pre-School through Twelfth

Location

Wasco, California

Time Period

This appraisal of rural Mexican-American students was made during the spring of 1967. Testing, scoring, interpreting and reporting of data was accomplished from February through May, 1967.

Personnel Involved

The Title III Kern County Research Project personnel, teachers and administrators of the Wasco Elementary School and the Wasco Union High School Districts and the Mexican-American pupils in attendance cooperated in this investigation. Dr. Uvaldo Palomares, Dr. Emery Cummins and Mrs. Marie Gordean functioned as the research team. A major purpose of their investigation was to obtain information about these pupils in the areas of perceptual-motor development, social-emotional growth, and academic-intellectual competence. One hundred

sixty-eight pupils were randomly selected from pre-school through grade twelve. An equal number of boys and girls was represented at each grade level.

Outcomes

The researchers have prepared a complete report on the instruments used, the findings, the data interpretation and the conclusions drawn from their research. They have also made recommendations for curricular adjustments based on their findings.

The data on measures of perceptual-motor skills suggest that the Mexican-American pupils in Wasco tend to fall behind the normative population in perceptual-motor development. The deficit appears to be progressive and begins to manifest itself at the end of the kindergarten years.

On measures of social and emotional appraisal, Mexican-American pupils tended to see themselves in a less favorable light than the normative population. Lowered self-esteem and feelings of inadequacy were apparently expressed but the social maturity of these pupils seems considerably higher than that of the middle-class normative population upon which the instruments were standardized.

The academic accomplishment of the Mexican-American population in Wasco appeared to show a progressive drop in achievement throughout the grades. The descent seemed to begin toward the end of the third grade and the corrosive effects of failure are seen clearly in the later grades.

In the individual assessments of intelligence, these pupils scored well within the normal limits in spite of the cultural bias of the measurement instruments. The researchers report that they failed to find the discrepant gap between verbal and non-verbal abilities that is often cited. There were differences but not to a significant degree.

Recommendations

1. The research findings from the Wasco study should be disseminated among educators throughout the state.

2. The recommendations for improved curricular approaches should be examined and implemented wherever applicable and feasible.

3. Continued study of the many home and school variables that affect the educational progress of these pupils should be made.

4. Psychologists and psychometrists should continue to seek ways to refine the psychological tools by which these pupils are evaluated, particularly those instruments that are heavily loaded with cultural content and/or items with which Mexican-American pupils have had limited or no experience.

XIII. The Activity

Public Service and Information

Location

Television programs to provide information for Spanish-speaking communities have been shown throughout the State of California.

Time Period

From November, 1966 to June, 1967

Personnel Involved

Mr. Eugene Gonzales served as chairman of this project, and it was coordinated by John Plakos in cooperation with National Defense Education Act personnel, Elementary-Secondary Education Act personnel, the Office of Compensatory Education, the Migrant Education Project, and the Adults with Spanish Surnames Project.

Outcomes

Eight programs have been produced and broadcast to Californians. Each program has been telecast with Spanish commentary. The themes treated have been the following:

1. Mexican-American Education Research Project
2. Union School District, San Jose, California in Mexico City
3. Special English Instruction for Spanish-Speaking Adults
4. Lay-Professional Advisory Committee, El Rancho Unified Schools
5. Interstate Migrant Education Project
6. Special Programming for Spanish-Speaking Students in California
7. Confluence of Cultures
8. Bilingualism

Recommendations

1. The use of television as a means of reaching Mexican-American families should be expanded.

2. Efforts to provide other telecasts in Spanish should be made so that other important issues may be discussed.

The Mexican-American Education Research Project has been engaged in a variety of activities designed to assist in the improvement of educational opportunities of Spanish-speaking pupils in the schools of California. Many needs have been identified, several issues have been brought to light and some of the solutio to these problems have become apparent. The

hope for developing true bilingual citizens who are fulfilling the promise of their potential has not as yet been realized. However, the continued search and cooperative efforts of the many individuals and agencies discussed in this report should bring educators closer to this goal.

The following publications developed by the Mexican-American Education Research Project are available for examination:

1. Prospectus for Equitable Educational Opportunities for Spanish-Speaking Children, Mrs. Ruth Craig, Mr. Edward Moreno, Dr. Walter Symons, Dr. Eleanor Thonis

2. Evaluating the Effectiveness of Programs Designed to Improve the Education of Mexican-American Pupils, Dr. Eleanor Thonis

3. Evaluation of Experimental Enriched Summer School, Los Nietos School Districts (Elementary and Secondary),Dr. Joan Lasko

4. Report Dealing with the Reactions of Children and Parents to the ESL Summer Program-1966, San Diego City Schools, San Ysidro School District, Dr. Leila V. Tossas

5. Assessment of Rural Mexican-American Students in Grades Pre-School through Twelfth, Wasco, California, Dr. Emery J. Cummins and Dr. Uvaldo H. Palomares

6. Survey of Mexican-American Pupils in the Schools - Their Strengths and Needs, Mexican-American Education Research Project

7. Study of Vocational Maturity, Los Nietos School District, Dr. Ilah M. Wilstach

8. Vocational Maturity of Mexican-American Children and Youth, Wasco Union Elementary School and Wasco Union High School, Dr. Ilah M. Wilstach

ED018283

U.S. School Administrators Learn of Navajo "Revolution"

(Editor's Note: Following is the text of a speech made on February 19 by Dr. William J. Benham Jr., at the 100th annual conference of the American Association of School Administrators. The conference was held at Atlantic City, N.J. Dr. Benham is Assistant Area Director (Education) of the Navajo Area of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. An 18-year employee of the BIA, he is part-Creek Indian. His great-great grandfather, William F. Robison, a full-blood Creek, served as superintendent of all Creek Nation schools in Oklahoma in the 1880s. His great-grandmother, Miss Lucy Robison, was a teacher in Creek schools).

Today, I want to report a revolution. This is not a revolution in the traditional sense, which has as its aim the overthrow of a government. Rather, it is the rebellion of an Indian tribe -- the Navajo, the Nation's largest tribe --against the educational problems it faces.

The generals of the revolutionary forces are tribal leaders. In their ranks are Navajo parents and students and the Federal agencies that serve them on the reservation, notably the bureau of Indian Affairs. A most important weapon being used in this fight at the present time is Title I of Public Law 89-10.

Let us examine for a few minutes the Indian people caught up in this movement; the land, the problems; the leaders; and how Title I of Public Law 89-10 has assisted.

The Navajo reservation is in the Four Corners Area of the United States with parts of it located in Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah. Most of the reservation is in Arizona. It is an area of 16-million acres, or 25,000 square miles--about the size of the state of West Virginia. This beautiful, but barren land is made up of deep arroyos and high mesas. It is a land of vivid color contrasts, which find expression in the art objects of the Navajo people. Many Navajos still live in their traditional hogans, an octagonal dwelling made of logs and mud. The Navajos number about 110,000. Traditionally a

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semi-nomadic people, they value self-reliance and independence. The great courage and fortitude of the Navajo is evidenced by the manner the tribe withstood this winter, which has been extremely harsh.

The size of the tribe and t e relative isolation of the reservation has enabled the Navajo to preserve, to a large extent, their tribal way of life. They have preserved their own language. This language is completely different from English and other Indo-European languages. As one author said, it is so different it forces the speaker into two different images of reality. Only a handful of non-Navajos have ever mastered the Navajo language.

Generally speaking, the Navajos have accepted the concept of representative democracy. They have a tribal chairman and a 74-member tribal council, both elected every four years, and they are presently working on a tribal constitution, patterned after the United States constitution. Reservation land is held in com-con by the Tribe, but, contrary to popular belief, individual Navajos receive no subsidy from either the Tribe or the Federal Government.

Let's examine some of the problems the Navajos--and most reservation Indians for that matter--face.

When compared with the general population, the Navajo American people who live on the reservation, face disadvantages ranging from health to housing, from lack of education to unemployment.

A high birth and mortality rate are part of the Navajo way of life. Both birth rate and infant death rate are higher than that for the general population.

At least half of all adult Navajos are unemployed. Some work on seasonal, part-time jobs--such as migrant form labor--but few work the year-round. This is a distressing figure in light of the national unemployment rate of four or five per cent. Most reservation families have an annual income of $1,500 to $1,800--just about half of the $3,000 used to designate the poverty line for the general population.

In addition to these handicaps, the reservation Indian stands apart from the general population in another important, vital way. It is this: The Indian's cultural background, like the language which reflects it, is quite different from that of other Americans.

These differences are reflected through lack of success, generally speaking, in the classroom. Too often the Indian student -- confronted with a completely new world in the classroom -- drops out of school. Too often, the Indian student succumbs to a feeling of helplessness and inadequacy. Too often, he is felled by a new, complex language -- English -- which to him is a "foreign" language. Too often, he has no knowledge of the teaching materials of the classroom, which reflect activities completely removed from his range of experiences. He wonders, and questions, the significance of being a Navajo Indian in a nation that is predominantly non-Indian.

The Education Committee of the Navajo Tribal Council, over the years, has tried to stay in touch with the needs of Navajo youth. This is a committee appointed by the tribal council, and its five members are all councilmen.

The Education Committee realizes that the median age of the reservation population is about 17 years -- this is to say about one-half of the population is 17 years of age and under.

The tribal council has utilized programs, such as the Economic Opportunity Act, to create opportunities for the adult population by programs of training, employment, housing and adult education. Through tribal efforts, industrialization and urbanization are developing on the reservation.

In early 1966, the Education Committee began the revolution in Navajo education. After a considerable discussion of the direction the revolution should take -- there was unanimous agreement that the following would be the goals for Navajo education.

1. To attack the unique problems of Navajo students by the provision of appropriate programs suited to the needs of these

students, such as the ESL program.

2. To seek maximum, feasible involvement of parents and tribal leaders in the educative program.

3. To develop a public information program which reflects progress made on a continuing basis.

4. To endeavor to assist in any way possible so that full utilization can be made of resources, including the Economic Opportunity Act, Public Law 89-10, and other similar programs which can benefit the Navajo people.

Even with the intense commitment, it was evident that in an era of rising costs, characterized by a "shrinking dollar," the goals would not be accomplished for many, many years. The committee was aware of the fact that the needs of the students were immediate.

This was true because the main problem confronting the Education Committee and Bureau of Indian Affairs personnel for the accomplishment of the goals was lack of financial resources. Resources to give needed impetus to revolutionary efforts. This changed rapidly, because in November 1966, by special provision of Congress, the 55 Federal schools serving some 20,000 Navajo students became eligible for participation under Public Law 89-10, or the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Public schools already were enjoying the fruits of this program.

Armed with this new resource, and with the Education Committee working closely with Bureau personnel, Title I projects were quickly formulated to meet the urgency of the situation.

Thus, with the direction determined by the Education Committee or the "generals," the revolution began to take form. Here is the sequence of events which followed.

It was determined that what the students needed most was better English-speaking capability and an improved self-image. Thus it was decided that the new resource -- Public Law 89-10 -- should be centered on these "key" needs, instead of dissipating this windfall on unrelated programs.

The time was ripe. Earlier in the year a committee had been formed -- composed of teachers, school principals and others trained in English as-a-second-language, or ESL. This committee was an outgrowth of an experiment begun at a boarding school at Shiprock, New Mexico in 1959. It was shown that the linguistic approach to teaching English to the nine out of ten students who came to school speaking only Navajo was clearly superior.

Thus, the first objective in providing an appropriate program was to institute the ESL approach in the 900 classrooms in Bureau schools on the reservation.

To do this, consultants of national reputation were hired to help in planning and evaluation. Existing inservice training was stepped up, new inservice training planned, and work on tests was begun by outside specialists to determine the progress and placement of students in terms of their English capabilities. Off-reservation language enrichment experiences were begun.

The employment of consultants of national stature was of much consequence. The appraisals given after field visits helped to enrich the activities being carried on and gave persons engaged in this formidable task assurance that the right path was being taken. It also provided an opportunity for professional growth by Navajo Area educators.

Before Public Law 89-10 had been made applicable to Federal schools, two schools had been designated ESL Training Centers. Based on a most favorable evaluation by the consultants of the week-long training sessions being conducted, the sessions were accelerated. This enabled the most skilled practitioners in ESL to orient other personnel, including some from public schools, to ESL theory, methods and practice.

Other inservice training opportunities were made possible. With Title I help, a contract was made to get ESL training films developed. This was done. The training films became a helpful addition to a two-week session held at the close of the school year in English as-a-second-language. More than 900 teachers

attended this session, which was under the direction of Dr. Robert Wilson of the University of California at Los Angeles. Helping Dr. Wilson were other members of the faculty of UCLA, and about 45 graduate assistants. The careful planning of this session by Dr. Wilson and staff members assured its success. This might well be one of the largest group training efforts in the country.

With this help, this year, it has been possible to implement an ESL program in every classroom in every Federal school on the Navajo reservation.

It must be noted that other help was received, also. Working with the Universities of Arizona and California, two NDEA workshops in ESL were planned. From them, 50 Navajo Area personnel received 6 to 8 weeks in-depth training in ESL.

Public Law 89-10, Title I, made another important contribution to language enrichment. Last year, all Navajo students in Federal schools were able to take bus trips to enlarge their limited experiences and give meaning and depth to language. For some of these students, it was their first time off the reservation -- their first opportunity to eat in a restaurant, ride in an elevator and stay in a motel.

Most of the trips were made to off-reservation locations such as Albuquerque and Phoenix. The trips were designed to let the students spend time in museums, factories, parks, zoos, tours of residential areas, and other activities which enlarged their experiences. According to teachers, this was, in effect, an upward bound program in itself. It gave new motivation to learning. This was made possible by Title I, Public Law 89-10.

Some strongly feel that this attention to English as-a-second-language and extension of experiences have had an effect on the self-image of the students. They feel that the confidence gained by the ESL approach has proven most beneficial. However, this is not the only effort being made in this regard.

With the help of Title I, Public Law 89-10, a contract was made with the University of New Mexico to develop Navajo

Social Studies units which could be used for a 4 to 6 weeks period each of the 12 years of the students' schooling. As conceived, it will be a multi-disciplinary approach which utilizes contributions from anthropology, sociology, psychology and other fields. The studies will be concerned with the history, legends, government, problems, and opportunities of the Navajo people. Most important, it will have as its central aim the development of a proper appreciation of the students' rich heritage -- heritage which will certainly lead to future accomplishments. Material on Navajo legends is being developed at the Rough Rock Demonstration School in Arizona which will be used in the Social Studies units. This school is jointly sponsored by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Office of Economic Opportunity.

Other important Title I projects were carried out at individual locations. These included summer bus trips of extended periods for enrichment purposes, a multi-media project to accelerate learning, a project to use parents in dormitories, and provisionsfor summer sessions for high school students.

Not only has teacher morale been improved but the activity made possible by Public Law 89-10 has enabled the revolution in Navajo Education to extend beyond the bounds of the classroom. Because of the impetus given by the generals to goal formulation and Title I projects, much more activity was stimulated.

To illustrate, not only did "Tribal Leaders" Day and " "Parents' Day" become regular events in all Navajo area schools, but something else important happened. A movement started for the formation of school boards made up of Indian residents of the reservation. This has gained momentum.